



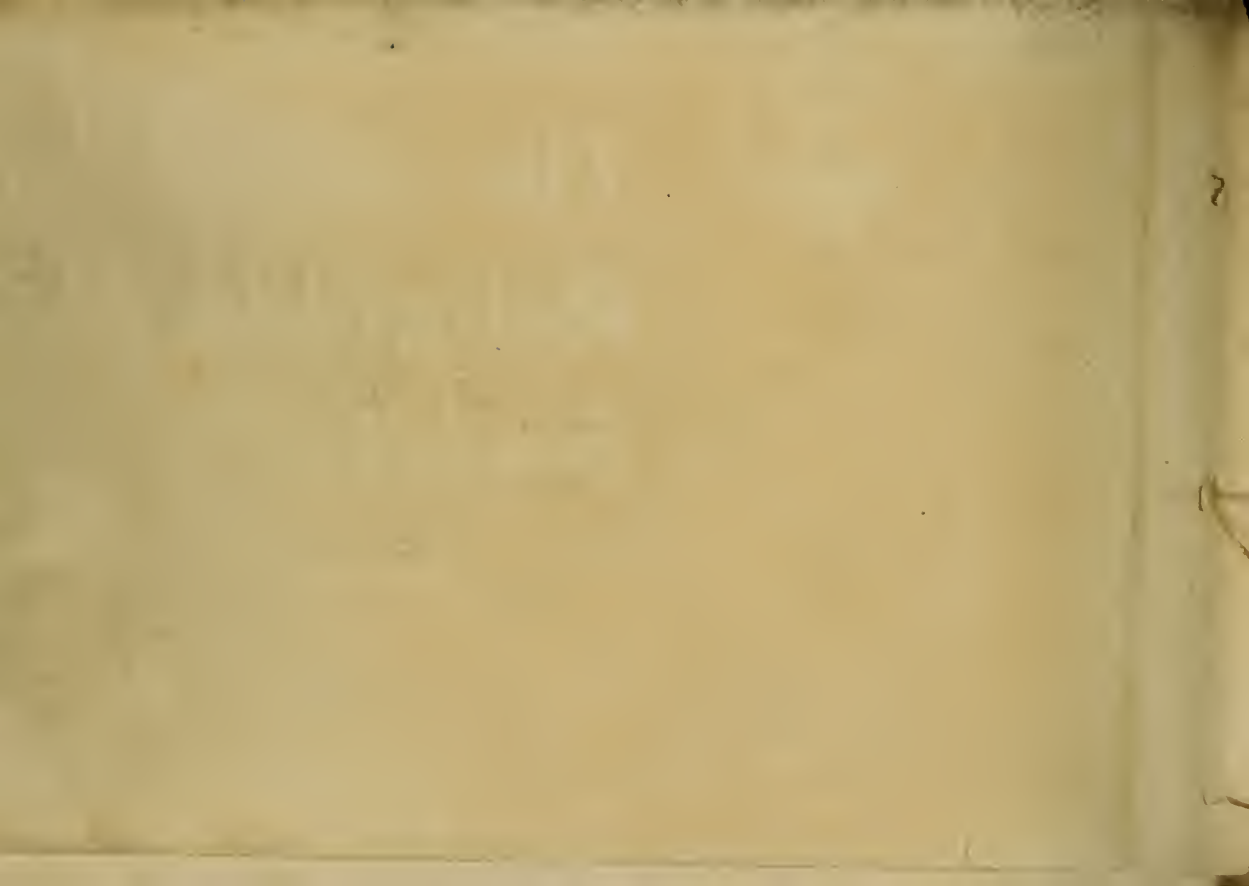
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The Religious Tract Soc.

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# The Story of the Religious Tract Society



A Souvenir  
Of the Meeting  
Held at the Mansion House  
On Tuesday, March 22nd, 1898



No. 549.117



GIVEN BY

*The Religious Tract Society*





LONDON: THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

The Religious Tract Soc.,

June 21, 1898,

Dear Sir,

I have

the pleasure to

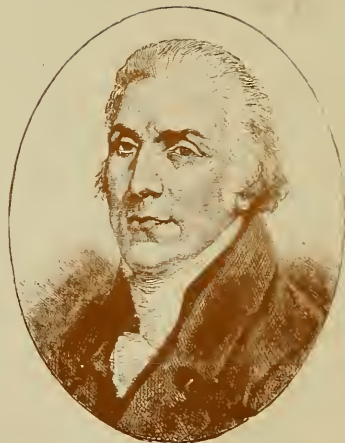


# THE STORY OF THE . . . RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

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## ***How the Society began.***

AT seven o'clock on a May morning—May 9, 1799—about forty gentlemen, most of them ministers of the Gospel, are seen entering St. Paul's Coffee House, in St. Paul's Churchyard, London. Most noteworthy amongst them is the celebrated Rowland Hill, of Surrey Chapel. There, too, is the Rev. David Bogue, of Gosport, so well known for his *Essay on the Inspiration of the New Testament*. And there is one who has brought them all together—the Rev. George Burder, of Coventry.



REV. GEORGE BURDER,  
*Founder of the Society.*

On the previous day, Mr. Burder was present at the Annual Sermon of the London Missionary Society at Surrey Chapel, and, having obtained the consent of the Rev. Rowland Hill, invited the ministers present to meet after the sermon in the schoolroom adjoining the chapel. There he unfolded his plan for the formation of a society "to promote the dispersion of religious tracts, which should develop more fully than Mrs. Hannah More had done in her excellent Cheap Repository Tracts, the evangelical doctrines of the Gospel." After some conversation, those present agreed to meet on the following morning at St. Paul's Coffee House. There, at their early breakfast, these good men founded the Religious Tract Society. Early breakfasts—though in these degenerate days the hour has become eight instead of seven—are still a time-honoured custom of the Committee of the R.T.S. Around its table, busy city men and professional men meet every Tuesday morning to discuss the great work of the Society, and the mission field is frequently represented by visitors from Africa, India, China, Polynesia, and the Continent of Europe.

### ***The First Tract.***

Tract No. 1 on the Society's Catalogue was *An Address to Christians on the Distribution of Religious Tracts*, by the Rev. David Bogue. In this tract the advantages of the printed page, as a means of spreading the truth, are admirably set forth. "Every one," says the writer, "has not the talent of talking to others on subjects of religion. Some have a diffidence which they cannot overcome. But it is not so hard to take a tract and say, 'My

friend, read that, and tell me what you think of it.' It is a cheap way of diffusing the knowledge of religion ; it is not so likely to give offence as some other methods of doing good ; it is more extensive in its use than any other method ; and it forms an excellent accompaniment to other methods of doing good."

The writer then states some qualities which should be found in a good tract. It should contain pure truth—"nothing to recommend one denomination or to throw odium on another ; but pure, good-natured Christianity, in which all the followers of the Lamb, who are looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, can unite with pleasure, as in one great common cause." There should be some account of the way of salvation in every tract. It should be plain. It should be striking. It should be entertaining. It should be full of ideas.

Such was the ideal tract as sketched by one of the early founders of the Society. Before leaving the name of Mr. Bogue, it should be mentioned that his *Essay on the Inspiration of the New Testament* has long been published by the Society. A copy of it was in the possession of Napoleon Buonaparte at the time of his death, and several passages were marked by his pencil.



JOSEPH REYNIER, ESQ.,  
*First Treasurer.*

### ***The Treasurers of the Society.***

The first Treasurer of the Society was Joseph Reyner, Esq., a leading London merchant. For nearly thirty years he was connected with the Society. His interest in its work was very great. He would sometimes say, "I would rather sell my coat than that the work should stop." It was his constant practice, especially on Sunday mornings, to give away hundreds of tracts on Tower Hill and in other parts of London. He died in 1837, having resigned the treasurership in 1827.

The second Treasurer was John Broadley Wilson, Esq., who took a special interest in the publication by the Society of the works of the Reformers and Puritan divines. He died in 1835.

Samuel Hoare, Esq., of Hampstead, was the third Treasurer. On his death, in 1846, he was succeeded by his son, John Gurney Hoare, Esq., of Lombard Street, the fourth Treasurer of the Society.

Mr. Gurney Hoare died in 1875, and was succeeded by Joseph Gurney, Esq., the fifth Treasurer, who had been a member of the Committee from the year 1829. The Society owed much to Mr. Gurney's wise and large-hearted liberality. To mention only one instance, the entire cost of the plates for the first edition of the Annotated Paragraph Bible was defrayed by him.

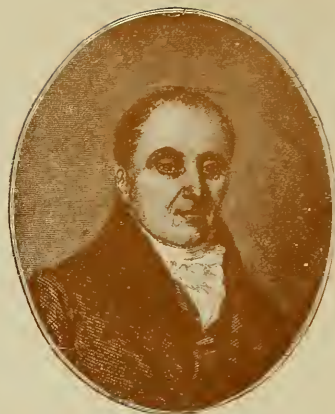
The sixth and present Treasurer is Edward Rawlings, Esq., who succeeded Mr. Gurney on the death of that gentleman in 1880. Mr. Rawlings has been a member of the Committee since 1853.

### ***The Secretaries of the Society.***

The first Honorary Secretary of the Society, and one of its founders, was the Rev. Joseph Hughes, of Battersea, which is described in the Jubilee Memorial Volume of 1850 as "a pleasant village on the banks of the Thames, about four miles from London." Mr. Hughes died in 1833. With him was associated, as Foreign Secretary, in 1808, the Rev. Dr. Steinkopff, who did much to extend the Society's work on the continent of Europe, until his resignation in 1820.

In 1812 the Rev. Legh Richmond, rector of Turvey, was appointed as an additional Honorary Secretary. Mr. Richmond was the author of those popular tracts, *The Dairyman's Daughter* and *The Young Cottager*. He died in 1827, and was succeeded by the Rev. R. W. Sibthorp, B.D., Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, who retired in 1837, his successor being the Rev. Robert Monro, Chaplain of the Bridewell Hospital.

After the death of Mr. Hughes, his place as one of the Honorary Secretaries was filled in 1834 by the appointment of the Rev. Dr. Henderson, who had already rendered valuable service in Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland.



REV. JOSEPH HUGHES,  
*First Secretary.*

Mr. Monro was succeeded in 1850 by the Rev. W. W. Champneys, Rector of St. Mary's, Whitechapel, and afterwards Dean of Lichfield.

Dr. Henderson died in 1858, and was succeeded by the Rev. R. Vaughan, D.D. Dr. Vaughan died in 1869 and was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Halley, D.D., President of New College.

On the death of the Dean of Lichfield in 1875, he was succeeded in the Honorary Secretaryship by Bishop Anderson.

Dr. Halley died in 1876, and was succeeded by the Rev. John Stoughton, D.D. Dr. Stoughton continued as one of the Honorary Secretaries until his death in 1897. He was a man of wide sympathies, beloved by all good men, and the author of many valuable works.

Bishop Anderson resigned in 1880, owing to ill-health, and was succeeded by the Rev. Canon Fleming, B.D., who still remains one of the Honorary Secretaries.

The duties at present discharged by the Secretaries of the Society were at first fulfilled by the Honorary Secretaries, and subsequently in part by the "superintendent." The first Superintendent and Corresponding Secretary was Mr. John Davis, who was succeeded in 1842 by Mr. W. Jones, the counting-house department being then entrusted to Mr. William Tam.

Mr. William Jones died in 1855. His successor was Mr. (afterwards Dr.) George H. Davis, who died in 1876. Dr. Davis was succeeded by the Rev. Samuel Manning, LL.D., and the Rev. (now Prebendary) Lewis Borrett White, D.D., as Joint Secretaries. In 1882 Dr. Manning was succeeded by the Rev. S. G. Green, D.D.





THE COMMITTEE AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE.  
*Tuesday, 18th January, 1898.*

[See page 4.]

### *The Society's Premises.*

The publishing business of the Religious Tract Society was first carried on at 10, 'Stationers' Court, a narrow lane which still runs from Ludgate Hill to Stationers' Hall. Whence, in 1806, the Society removed to 60, Paternoster Row. In 1820, premises were taken at 14, Newgate Street, but, the result not proving satisfactory, Paternoster Row was tried again; this time at No. 56. There, for the greater part of the century, has been the home of the Religious Tract Society. The houses Nos. 57, 58, and 59 were subsequently added; then 65, St. Paul's Churchyard, where the retail Book Saloon, with Committee Room above, still stands, and, finally, four small houses in Chapter-house Court, occupied in ancient times by the monks of St. Paul's.

The Committee held their first three meetings at Haberdashers' Hall, then for a short time at Mr. Reyner's house in Duck's-foot Lane, and then for several years at the counting-house of Joseph Hardcastle, Esq., at Old Swan Stairs, in Upper Thames Street, near London Bridge. Mr. Hardcastle was then the Treasurer of the London Missionary Society. Finally, the Committee removed their meetings to Paternoster Row.

The site of these fine buildings is historic ground. From the editorial rooms in front, as well as from those which are at the back of the Chapter House, the editors look out upon that stately Cathedral, Sir Christopher Wren's noble monument, the centre of so much interest in the religious life of England. There the Prince of Wales went to return thanks to Almighty God for his recovery from dangerous illness. There, too, in 1897,

our gracious Sovereign Queen Victoria went in State, surrounded by representative men from all parts of the British Empire, and by the ambassadors of foreign powers, to give thanks to God for her long reign of sixty years.

From the rooms over the book saloon you may also look down upon the spot where St. Paul's Cross once stood. There, in 1521, Cardinal Wolsey sat in state, while Fisher fulminated against Luther, a collection of Luther's books being burnt during the sermon. There, too, Tindale's Testaments were burnt. But the truth of God was not consumed. The Religious Tract Society, within sight of that very spot, sends forth into all the world those Reformation principles which fire and sword were powerless to kill.

At one end of Paternoster Row is Warwick Lane. There, at the Bell Inn, the good Archbishop Leighton breathed his last. He had been often heard to say that if he was to choose a place to die in, it would be an inn, as suitable to the pilgrim character of life. The Bell Inn is not now in existence.

Near the Cheapside end of "the Row" is Panyer Alley, where you may still see the inscription on the wall—

When you have sought the citty round,  
Yet still this is the highest ground.  
August the 27, 1688.



REV. CANON FLEMING, B.D.,  
*Hon. Secretary.*

### ***The Duke of Kent.***

In the year 1816 the Rev. Legh Richmond, then one of the Secretaries of the Religious Tract Society, sent a set of the Society's publications to his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, the father of our beloved Queen. His Royal Highness wrote thanking Mr. Richmond and the Committee, and concluded as follows :—

Mr. Richmond will oblige the Duke when next he meets the Committee, by expressing the satisfaction he derives from being possessed of such valuable works, rendered doubly so by the manner in which they have been presented, and the channel through which they have reached him.

### ***The Emperor Alexander of Russia.***

In 1817 Mr. Richmond sent a copy of his book, the *Annals of the Poor*, to the Emperor Alexander of Russia. The Emperor replied, accepting the volume “with the greatest satisfaction,” and adding :—

The object of this volume, the promotion of Christian charity and truly religious sentiments, renders it most interesting and valuable in the eyes of the Emperor, who desires nothing so much as to see the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ our Saviour more and more universal in his dominions, and in the whole world.

### ***The Society's Books.***

The Committee of the Religious Tract Society soon found that, to adapt itself to the spread of education, and to supply the need for religious literature, it must not confine itself to tracts alone. Indeed, the first rule of the Society, which was adopted at its foundation, states that its object shall be “the circulation of small religious *books* and treatises in foreign countries as well as through the British dominions.”

The necessity of good books for the young first impressed the Committee. Young people in those days had not the advantages of the boys and girls of to-day. To provide for them wholesome and pleasant reading, the Religious Tract Society began in 1814 its series of Children's Books.

Several years later—in 1825—it began the publication of books for older people. Its earliest books of this class were Brooks's *Precious Remedies*, Bunyan's *Holy War*, Adam's *Private Thoughts*, Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, and Bogatzky's *Golden Treasury*.

From that time the Society has published many notable books. It has published or assisted to publish the *Pilgrim's Progress* in about ninety languages; many important Commentaries, including Leighton on *St. Peter*, Hodge on the *Epistle to the Romans*, and Barnes on the *Gospels* in abridged form; the *Bible Handbook* by Dr. Angus; the *Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament* by Dr. S. G. Green; James's *Anxious Inquirer* (a book which reached a circulation of more than 845,000). In 1894 was issued an entirely new edition of *The Annotated Paragraph Bible*, with the notes and introductions re-written by Dr. S. G. Green.

Its series of handbooks on *By-paths of Bible Knowledge* has been much appreciated.



EDWARD RAWLINGS, ESQ.,  
Hon. Treasurer.

Amongst those who contributed volumes to this series are Professor Sayce, Dr. Wallis Budge, Sir J. Risdon Bennett, and Sir J. W. Dawson.

Another popular series has been the "Pen and Pencil" series, beautifully illustrated, and descriptive of the life and history and scenery of many lands. Amongst these volumes may be mentioned *Canadian Pictures* by the Marquis of Lome; *Greek Pictures* by Professor Mahaffy; *Swiss Pictures* (the first of the series); *English* and *Scottish Pictures* by Dr. S. G. Green; *Irish*, *United States*, *Norwegian*, and *London Pictures* by the Rev. Richard Lovett; *The Lands of Scripture* by Dr. Manning; and *Sea Pictures* by Dr. Macaulay. Many of the fine illustrations are the work of Mr. Edward Whymper.

Among its works of wholesome and instructive fiction for the young have been *Jessica's First Prayer*, which originally appeared in the *Sunday at Home*, and more than thirty other volumes by Hesba Stretton; *Christie's Old Organ*, *A Peep Behind the Scenes*, and many other delightful tales from the pen of Mrs. Walton; *Before the Dawn*, and twenty-five other books by Emma Leslie; *Crushed yet Conquering* and *Dr. Adrian* by Miss Alcock; the well-known books for boys by Mr. G. E. Sargent and Mr. Talbot Baines Reed; *Tom Heron of Sax* and many other works by Miss Evelyn Everett-Green; and more recently *Probable Sons*, *Teddy's Button*, *Odd*, &c., by Miss Le Feuvre.

### ***Sunday-School Libraries.***

For many years the Religious Tract Society has made grants of books at reduced



prices to the Sunday-school libraries of all denominations. It has also provided libraries for congregations and colleges, ministers and teachers, hospitals and asylums, homes and prisons, associations and institutions. In this way it has issued about 53,700 libraries, or collections of from 25 to 500 volumes at a time, at a cost of over £214,000. It is hard to estimate what a boon this has been to churches and Sunday-schools, or how many lives have been thus influenced for good.



### ***The Missionary Work of the Society.***

Much of the publication work already referred to is distinctly missionary in its character. But, in addition to this, the Society takes a very active and important part in the great work of Foreign Missions.

Those who know the Continent of Europe know how great is the need of popular evangelical literature in most European countries. This need the Society endeavours to supply, sometimes by assisting the local societies, sometimes by its own direct agency. Every country in Europe gets help in this way.

In Asia, numerous Societies and Missions in India, China, Japan, etc., get grants from the Society. These grants are chiefly devoted to assisting the production of Christian literature in native languages. The Society is doing its best to foster *original works by native Christians*.

REV. PREBENDARY WHITE, D.D.,  
*General Secretary.*

Not only minor evangelistic literature is thus produced, but also volumes of from fifty to a thousand pages, in the form of commentaries, Bible dictionaries, histories, theological works, and educational literature of a Christian character, have been issued.

In Africa and Madagascar the Society has published works in over thirty African languages.

America, North and South, Canada and the West Indies all share in the Society's help.

Australia, New Zealand, and the Islands of the Pacific have largely benefitted by the Society's operations.

The Society has assisted to publish literature in 224 languages.

It assists the Missionary Societies of all the Churches. Missionaries of the Church Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society, the Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Baptist, China Inland, the French, German, Swiss, and other great Missionary Societies, have again and again expressed their indebtedness for help in their publication work.

Many missionaries find the large coloured pictures of Scripture scenes and stories, issued by the Society, of great service in their work.

### ***Present-Day Tracts.***

From ministers of the Gospel, from Sunday-school teachers, and from young men who have found difficulties in the Christian faith, have come many testimonies to the value of the Society's series of Present-Day Tracts. These tracts have been published at 4d. each,

and have also been issued in 2s. 6d. volumes, thirteen of which have been published, chiefly under the able editorship of the late Rev. John Kelly. Some of the foremost scholars and thinkers of our time have contributed to them. The topics include "Christianity and Miracles," "Christianity and Secularism," "Modern Materialism," "Rise and Decline of Islam," "The Ancient Monuments and the Old Testament Scriptures," "Man Physiologically Considered," "Buddhism," "The Ethics of Evolution," "Socialism and Christianity," etc.



THE REV. S. G. GREEN, D.D.,  
*Editorial Secretary.*

### ***The Society's Magazines.***

The two oldest of the Society's numerous periodicals are THE TRACT MAGAZINE and THE CHILD'S COMPANION. They were both commenced on the 1st January, 1824.\* The former is now continued under the name of LIGHT IN THE HOME. It is published at one penny monthly, and is largely used by tract distributors and other Christian workers.

The first yearly volume of *The Child's Companion* is a little book, about the size of a small prayer book (*see p. 27*). The results of its publication surpassed the most sanguine

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\* In Livingstone's Life is a glimpse of one of the homes into which these early magazines found admission. "Some publications of the Religious Tract Society," says Dr. Blaikie, "*The Weekly Visitor* and *The Child's Companion*, were taken in, and much enjoyed by David, especially the papers of 'Old Humphrey.'"

expectations of the Committee. In an address printed on the cover of *The Child's Companion* in December, 1824, the Committee state that they have decided to apply the profits upon that magazine to aid "the circulation of tracts in China and the East Indies." The early success of *The Child's Companion* was largely due to the great skill and ability of its Editor, Mr. John Cross, who also wrote many of the most popular booklets of the Society.

### ***The Leisure Hour.***

In 1852 the Committee took another forward step. They resolved to issue a family journal which should contain "information on literary, scientific, and general subjects, written in an attractive style, and in a religious spirit." This new magazine was called *The Leisure Hour*. It met with a most gratifying reception. The Prince Consort ordered several copies, and gave his encouragement in other ways. Archbishop Whately contributed largely to the early volumes. One of its first illustrators was the late Sir John Gilbert. Its first Editor was Mr. Haigh Miller. He was succeeded by Dr. James Macaulay, under whose skilful direction the magazine was enlarged and developed.

The success of the *Leisure Hour* in counteracting unwholesome literature was soon acknowledged by the best authorities. Referring, in January, 1870, to one bandit novelette which used to sell about 30,000 copies weekly, the *Athenæum* said: "The *Leisure Hour* has run the highwayman's horse into a fence, and left him with his head inextricably fixed in it."

Many a young writer who afterwards became famous found his first opportunity in the *Leisure Hour*. Quite a galaxy of young artists enriched its pages—among them Du Maurier, before his appointment to *Punch*.

In days when few travelled, unknown wanderers from many parts brought their notes—early settlers in Oregon, in Texas, in New Zealand ; men like Baines—who traversed much of Livingstone's ground, and was the first to sketch the Victoria Falls; travellers on the Nile in the first excavation days, to whom the later contributions of Flinders Petrie would be a revelation undreamt of. Valuable also were



the contributions of Lord, head of the exploring party sent into the Sinaitic peninsula by the Egyptian government; of Vambéry and Lansdell in Central Asia; Isabella Bird's "Adventures in the Rockies" and elsewhere; Miss Gordon Cumming's travel papers; the *Swiss Round* of Harry Jones; and much of the best work of Edward Whymper, who was an early ally in illustration, and has contributed even within the last year. In Natural History, from Frank Buckland to Wood, or from Tristram to Bosworth Smith, a crowd of observers have contributed.

Science has been represented by men of foremost rank in each department, such as James Glaisher and Sir William Dawson\*; history and biography by Sir E. Maunde Thompson, Sir Walter Besant, and Sir Reginald Palgrave; while in fiction, &c., the *Leisure Hour* has had such well-known contributors as Mrs. Henry Wood, Hesba Stretton, W. H. G. Kingston, Mrs. Oliphant, G. E. Sargent, Leslie Keith, Coulson Kernahan, Stanley Weyman, and other writers familiarly known to-day. Social questions, too, have had a large place. It was to the *Leisure Hour* that Mr. Massingham contributed his interesting series on "The London Daily Press." Bishop Creighton's "Story of Some English Shires" appeared there too. W. J. Gordon's "Midland Sketches," published in its pages during the past year, have aroused much attention in the great manufacturing centres which they describe.

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\* Thomas Carlyle, in a letter to Dr. Macaulay, referred to Dunkin's Astronomical Maps, which appeared in the *Leisure Hour*, and said, "Oh, why did not some one teach me the stars?" This letter is preserved in Carlyle's house at Chelsea.



### ***The Sunday at Home.***

The *Sunday at Home* was established in the year 1854. Its object was to provide "Sunday reading of an inviting description," and to bring before its readers religious literature in attractive forms.

Among its contributors have been eminent divines and other authors, representing various sections of the Christian Church. They include such names as Dr. Angus, Miss Alcock, Dr. G. S. Barrett, Miss E. Boyd Bayly, Dr. Horatius Bonar, Mr. J. Bonwick, Principal Cairns, Rev. James Chalmers, Dr. R. W. Dale, the late Dean of Canterbury, the present Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Merle D'Aubigné, the present Bishop of Derry, Dr. Edersheim, Dr. Monro Gibson, Bishop Ellicott, Dr. A. B. Grosart, Rev. W. Wyatt Gill, Professor Gibb, Dr. Richard Glover, Dr. Newman Hall, Silas K. Hocking, Henry A. Harper, Rev. F. Hastings,



Miss F. R. Havergal, Edwin Hodder, Dr. R. F. Horton, Rev. Dr. Keith, Rev. Frederick Langbridge, the Bishop of London, Miss Scott-Moncrieff, Rev. Dr. Alexander Maclaren, Professor Milligan, Rev. Dr. Hugh Macmillan, Dr. J. R. Macduff, Mr. A. Scott-Moncrieff, Dr. H. C. G. Moule, Mrs. Prosser, Rev. P. B. Power, Professor Rawlinson, Rev. Dr. Rigg, Rev. Alfred Rowland, Professor Sayce, Rev. Dr. Stoughton, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, Dr. Adolph Saphir, Professor G. T. Stokes, Eugene Stock, Martin F. Tupper, Rev. J. R. Vernon, Miss E. J. Whately, Rev. Richard Wilton, Dr. William Wright, and a host of others from all quarters of the world.

It is not often that a legacy is left to a magazine; but the following letter tells a touching story:—

Herewith I enclose a cheque for £10, being a legacy from a youth named Frederic Hedley, who lately died in my district. The words in his will on this subject are the following (*verbatim*):—

“I, Frederic Hedley, do hereby leave the sum of £10 to the Religious Tract Society, to be used by them exclusively for the use of the publishing the *Sunday at Home* and *Leisure Hour*, if possible.”

It is an interesting fact that through a lingering illness this lad derived so much instruction and comfort from these publications as to devote a considerable portion of his savings to their support.

### ***The Cottager and Artisan.***

This popular magazine was established in 1861, under the title of *The Cottager in Town and Country*. Costing only 1d. per month, it was intended specially to meet the needs of poorer readers both in town and country. It is gratifying to know that it is now a welcome visitor in thousands of humble homes.



JOINT DEPÔT OF THE BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETIES AT ALLAHABAD.

### ***Our Little Dots.***

The desirability of having a magazine for very young children had been long under consideration, and in 1886 the Committee commenced to publish *Our Little Dots*, whose bright pictures and pretty stories are now eagerly looked for by the little ones.

### ***The Boy's Own Paper.***

The *B.O.P.* was founded in 1878. Judges, magistrates, schoolmasters, prison chaplains and others had long been deploring the existence of pernicious literature as a fruitful source of juvenile crime. How to counteract this was the difficulty. Private enterprise shrank from it owing to the risk of pecuniary loss. At last the Committee of the R.T.S. undertook the task. It has been most gratifying to the Committee and the Editor to know that not only has the *Boy's Own Paper* supplanted much of the low-class literature and become a profitable publication, but that it has also won the hearts of thousands of boys and helped them in the paths of wisdom and goodness.

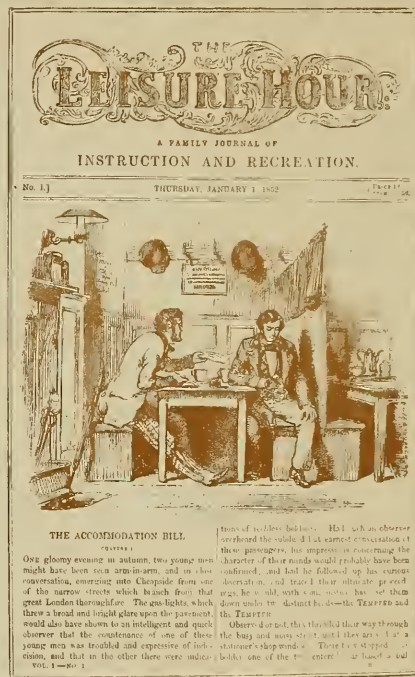
In practical philanthropy the *B.O.P.* has done good work. It has provided two lifeboats for the National Lifeboat Institution at a cost of £1,200, and handed £400 to the London Hospital, and £750 for the "Gordon Ward" at Dr. Barnardo's Homes.

The advice on all kinds of topics given in its correspondence columns has been much appreciated by its boy readers. Many a lad it "has saved from ruin" is the testimony of countless letters. Here is a typical extract from a letter received by the Editor:—

I have taken your paper for years, and have found it a very good paper to pass the time, and also to gain instruction from. I have been in New Zealand and the Fiji Islands these last five years, and many a weary night in the bush whares or on a sheep station has been lightened by its instructive tales. One little whare (house) in Rangitikei district, North Island, I recollect was adorned all over its walls with the pictures cut from the monthly parts; whilst the parts themselves, dog's-eared and dirty with wear, were laid on the rough slab table as household volumes.

The *B.O.P.* ever tries to illustrate by practical example the noblest type of manhood and the truest Christian devotion; nor does it lose any good opportunity of pointing to the Cross of Christ as at once the centre and the mainspring of all that is best in human character and action.

Among its contributors have been:—  
Rev. H. C. Adams, William Allingham, R. M. Ballantyne, Vice-Admiral Sir F. Bedford, Rev. A. R. Buckland, Commander V. Lovett



FACSIMILE OF FIRST NUMBER OF "LEISURE HOUR,"  
January 1, 1852.

Cameron, R.N., C.B., Dr. Conan Doyle, G. Manville Fenn, Somerville Gibney, W. J. Gordon, G. A. Henty, Rev. E. J. Hardy, Coulson Kernahan, David Ker, W. H. G. Kingston, Rear-Admiral Kennedy, Seymour Lucas, R.A., Rev. A. N. Malan, A. H. Moncrieff, Rev. T. S. Millington, Herr F. L. Meyer, Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, H. M. Paull, General Sir Robert Phayre, Talbot Baines Reed, Jessie M. Saxby, Dr. Gordon Stables, Dr. Schofield, Alma Tadema, Rev. J. G. Wood, Rev. Theodore Wood.

### ***The Girl's Own Paper.***

The rapid and remarkable success of the *Boy's Own Paper* encouraged the Committee to establish a companion magazine for girls. The *Girl's Own Paper* was founded in 1879. It soon attained great popularity.

Amongst the writers who have contributed to its pages have been the Queen of Roumania, the Duchess of Teck, Countess of Aberdeen, Annè Beale, Emma Brewer, Eliza Brightwen, Helen Marion Burnside, Rosa Nouchette Carey, Dora de Blaquièrè, Sarah Doudney, Evelyn Everett-Green, Sydney C. Grier, Beatrice Harraden, Ruth Lamb, Rev. Fred. Langbridge, Isabella Fyvie Mayo, Sarah Tytler, Lily Watson, and Mrs. L. B. Walford.

The musical department of the *Girl's Own Paper* has received special attention, and has largely contributed to the success of the magazine. Amongst those who have composed music for its pages are H.R.H. the Princess Henry of Battenberg (Princess Beatrice), Edvard Grieg, Myles B. Foster, Engelbert Humperdinck, Hamish MacCunn, Sir Alexander



Mackenzie, Sir George C. Martin, Dr. Hubert Parry, Ernst Pauer, Sir John Stainer, and Professor Villiers Stanford.

From thousands of girls in all parts of the world, and in all classes of society, have come testimonies to the help they have received from the *Girl's Own Paper*. Many speak gratefully of the benefit they found from the Girl's Own Guild of Scripture Reading. The mother as well as the daughter, the peeress as well as the cottager, the invalid as well as the healthy school-girl, have found the *Girl's Own Paper* a help in the duties and pleasures of the home, and a guide in those things that make for their eternal peace.

### ***Testimonies to the Society's Publications.***

A volume might be filled with personal testimonies, from all parts of the world, to benefit received from the publications of the Society. A few notable instances may however be given here.

The Princess Sophia Meshtchersky, cousin to the Emperor Alexander of Russia, testified to the great benefit she had received from one of the Society's earliest tracts, *The Dairyman's Daughter*, by Legh Richmond. She showed her gratitude by

## THE **CHILD'S COMPANION;**

OR,

*Sunday Scholar's Reward.*

—o—

VOL. I.



LONDON:

Printed for

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY;  
AND SOLD BY J. DAVIS, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW  
J. NISBET, 21, BERNERS STREET; AND AT  
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION DEPOT  
19, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1824.

FACSIMILE "CHILD'S COMPANION."  
(Exact size when first issued.)

giving large sums to aid in publishing in the Russian language this and other tracts, many of which she herself translated.

The next case is of persons very different in the social scale. John Leadbetter, a convict on board the convict ship *York*, moored off Gosport, received from a lady some of the Society's tracts. These tracts were blessed to his salvation. He then procured some tracts which he distributed among his fellow-prisoners. At first he met with great opposition and ridicule, but gradually his zeal and perseverance were rewarded. Many of the convicts were converted, and of their own accord sent a contribution of over three pounds, collected in weekly subscriptions amongst themselves, to the funds of the Religious Tract Society.

Leadbetter afterwards wrote to the Committee about his fellow-convicts :—"That a great change has taken place in their life and conduct no one can deny ; and for this change we are indebted to the Religious Tract Society."

Many testimonies were received as to changed lives resulting from the reading of such tracts as *The Sinner's Friend* and *The Swearer's Prayer*. These testimonies came from all classes—from officers in the army and from private soldiers, from sailors, from watermen, canal men, and others. *The Swearer's Prayer* was first published in 1806, and its total circulation has been 4,649,000.

During the Crimean war, much comfort and blessing was brought by tracts to the soldiers on the heights before Sebastopol, the lamented Captain Hedley Vicars being one of the most zealous distributors.

The revival of religion in Ireland in 1859, generally known as the "Ulster Revival," led to a great demand for the Society's tracts, which were found of great service in instructing and guiding those who came under religious impressions.

During the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, large numbers of French and German tracts were distributed among the soldiers, and read with avidity by the troops on both sides.

Similarly during the

# LIST OF TRACTS ALREADY PRINTED

Tracts already printed, and ready for delivery, by the Society, No. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

1. A Letter to the People, on the Dilemma of the Choice. Price 1d. or 3d.
2. The Love of God between a Minister and a People. Price 1d. or 3d.
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11. Life

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99. Life. Price one halfpenny, or 3d.
100. Life. Price one halfpenny, or 3d.

[The above tracts are in Numbers, and are to be had in one Volume, Price 1s. 6d. bound, or 2s. 2d. bound.]

28. The

Russo-Turkish war of 1877, tracts in the Russian, German, Polish, Finnish, Tartar, Bulgarian, Roumanian, Slavonic, and other languages, were distributed, and were gratefully received by the soldiers on the Russian side, while Turkish and Arabic tracts were given to Turkish prisoners.

A gentleman wrote in 1879, "I lately received a letter from Poland, asking for sixteen copies of the tract called *The Prodigal Son* (First Series, No. 122), the writer informing me that I had *thirty years before* given him a copy of that tract, which had been preserved, and which had lately been the means of awakening *sixteen persons* to care for their souls, for each of whom he wanted a copy of that tract."

### ***The Bible Society.***

Many of the warm friends of both Societies are not aware that the British and Foreign Bible Society is the daughter of the Religious Tract Society. In January, 1804, the Bible Society was founded by the Committee of the Religious Tract Society.

The first proposal of a society for the special publication of the Scriptures was brought before the Committee of the Religious Tract Society in December, 1802, by the Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala. The story of Mr. Charles meeting a little girl in Wales who was in the habit of walking a distance of seven miles once a week to a place where she could find a Welsh Bible is well known. This so impressed Mr. Charles that he came to London and urged the formation of such a society for Wales upon the R.T.S. Committee. His appeal was supported

by Mr. Tarn. The Committee resolved, at the suggestion of Mr. Hughes, that it was desirable that such a Society should be formed, not only for Wales, but for the whole world. Mr. Hughes, the first Secretary of the Religious Tract Society, became also one of the first secretaries of the Bible Society.

This was the origin of that vast Society, which now encircles the world with its ministry of light, and scatters in all lands the leaves of the tree which are for the healing of the nations.

It is pleasant to record that the two Societies have worked together, both in London and throughout the world, in perfect harmony. In many towns in England and elsewhere their depots occupy the same building, and are sometimes under the one manager.

(*Tuesday Jan<sup>y</sup> 10 - 1804*  
*At a special meeting for the purpose of forming*  
*the Bible Society.*

*Present — Mr. Burder in the Chair —*  
*Rev<sup>d</sup> Messrs. Pugh, Thomas, Jones, Campbell, Hills, How-*  
*ells, Hughes, Tarn.*

*Resolved*

- 1 That the title of the Society be — "The British and*  
*Foreign Bible Society," agreeably to the suggestion of the Secretary.*
- 2 That a circular letter on the subject be prepared*  
*by the Secretary of the Tract Society against next*  
*Tuesday.)*

(*Passing to the object of the British and*  
*Foreign Society —*

*Two letters were read from Mr. Wilkesford*  
*signifying his cordial concurrence in the general*  
*object, and suggesting the propriety of further consultation.*

FACSIMILE PAGE OF MINUTES OF THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,  
 JANUARY 10TH, 1804, RELATING TO THE ORIGIN OF  
 THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

The story has been well told in a little book called *The Founders and Presidents of the Bible Society*, by Henry Morris.

### ***Biblical Instruction in Day Schools.***

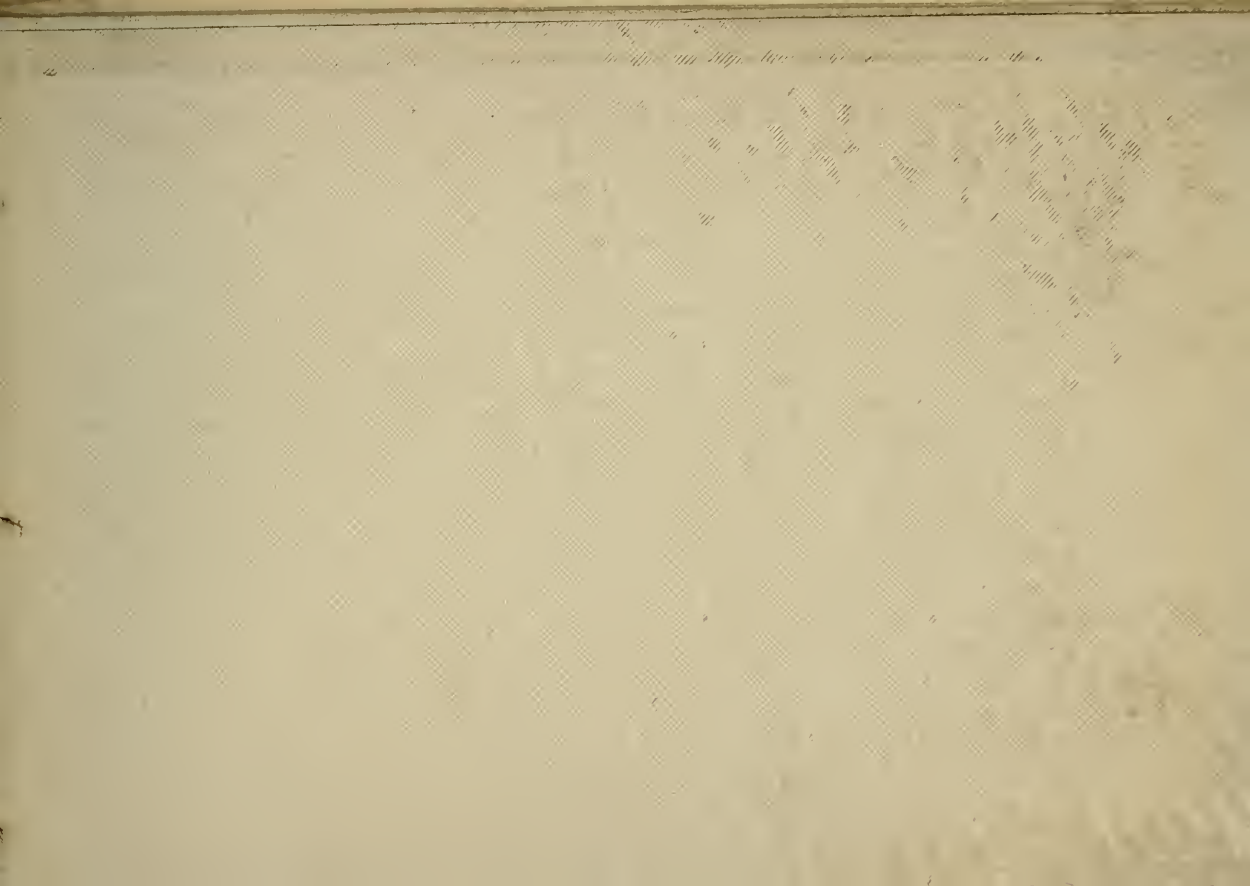
The Society helps Biblical Instruction in public elementary schools, by assisting to provide prizes for proficiency in biblical knowledge. In London alone, 301,773 children were examined in 1896.

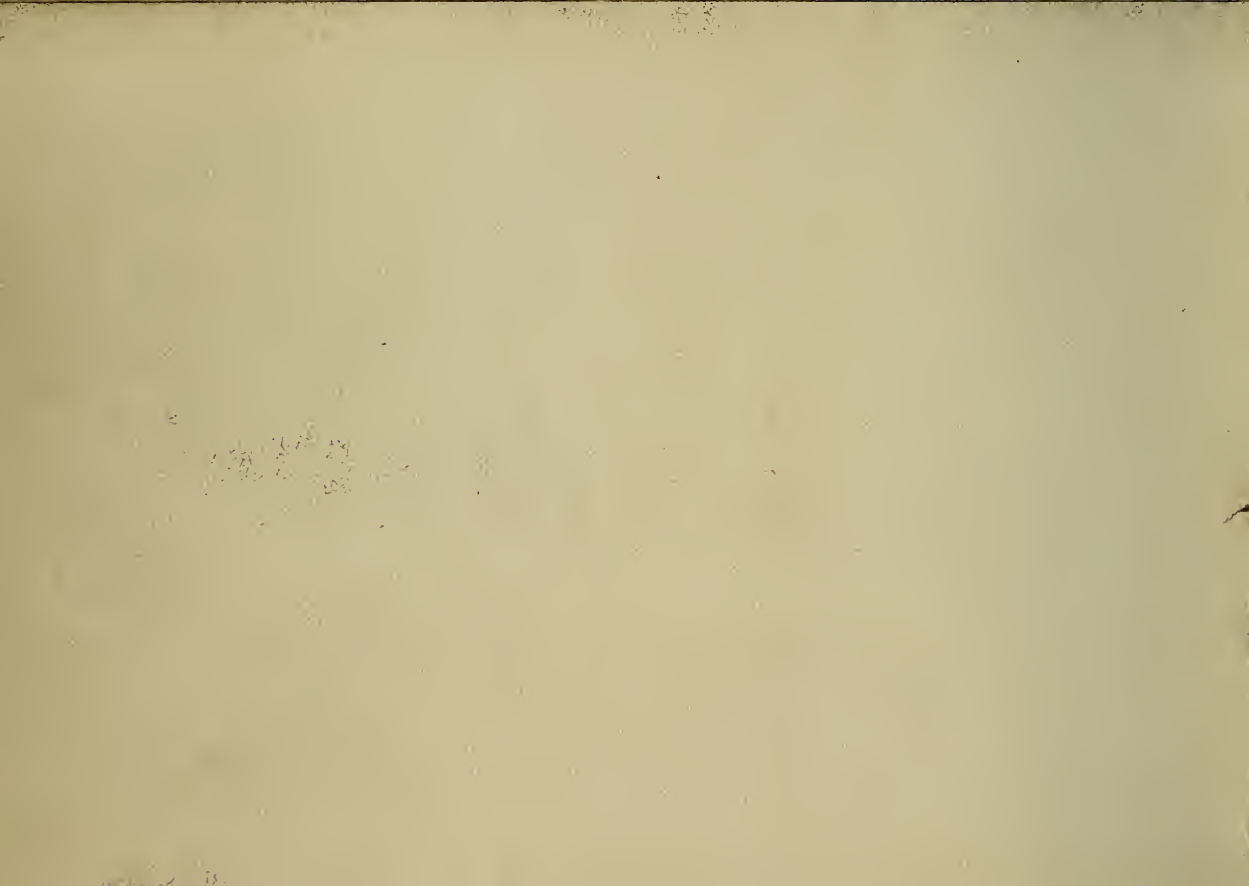
### ***An Officer of Literature.***

The *Christian Witness* in December, 1852, said: "We last year called attention to the subject of an 'Officer of Literature' for every one of our congregations. We are satisfied that nothing more is wanted to work a complete change in many a congregation, and vastly to improve the knowledge and activity of the churches." It then goes on to refer to the practice of the Rev. M. Wright, of Honiton. That excellent minister employed a poor woman, a member of his congregation, and herself interested in the object, to perambulate the town and adjacent villages with copies of the chief religious periodicals, including the *Tract Magazine* and various publications of the Religious Tract Society, to offer them for sale.

How much good might yet be done both in town and country by having some one in each congregation to *bring* religious literature to the homes of its members. Where there are no col-porteurs, this plan should be, where possible, universally adopted.











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